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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 26 | Min 19 | Humidity 76% Scattered Showers Sensex 78,472 | Nifty 23,750 | Gold 76,565 | Silver 89,556 | Dollar 85.27 | Euro 88.57 | GBP 106.80

RAIN, RAIN GO AWAY?

Well, weathermen say this probably was last of drizzles in city; so we are likely to have a dry end to year

PAGE 2

NYE UPDATES

Railway police up checks, vigil to stop banned substances in its tracks; Nandi Hills is off-limits for Dec 31 parties

PAGE 5

As cases of demanding excess fares, refusing to go on hires double in one year, drivers speak of pressures they face, while passengers cry out on social media for recourse

YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE BEING TAKEN FOR A RIDE?

3,136 cases of overcharging, 3,138 cases of refusing hires in 2024

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> **"Sometimes the destination is too far, or our health conditions make it challenging. Yet, we still come to work to meet our needs. Even through service apps, we earn incentives only when we meet certain targets** — Auto driver

The tension between drivers and passengers shows no sign of abating, as is revealed by the sharp surge in complaints against auto drivers and cab services. A staggering 6,274 cases have been reported this year alone for demanding excess fare and refusing to take passengers for hire. This is double the number of cases recorded last year.

In 2023, 1,599 cases of demanding excess fare were recorded, leading to ₹7,30,400 in fines. In 2024, the number of such cases doubled to 3,136, with fines totaling ₹16,50,300. The most recent incident came to light in early December, when a 20-year-old college student, took to social media to say a cab driver threatened assault after being refused extra money.

BM spoke to auto drivers to understand their perspective. A driver said, "It is the passengers' responsibility not to pay extra if a driver demands more. Auto drivers may ask for additional fares, ranging from ₹50 to ₹1,000, but passengers should refuse. If one passenger agrees to pay extra, the driver will demand the same from others. When it's not given, they may become rude. Instead of letting this escalate, it should be refused right from the start."

Another driver said there are often valid reasons for refusing to take passengers. "Sometimes the destination is too far, or our health conditions make it challenging. Yet, we still come to work to meet our needs. Many of us work honestly. Even through service apps, we earn incentives only when we meet certain targets," he said.

Social media platforms often

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

Out of site, out of mind

BDA plot owners fleeced by middlemen, forced to run to office for paperwork, bribe officials — all due to want of website

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The absence of an online platform to apply for construction plan approval in Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) has been causing inordinate delays and facilitating middlemen to exploit site owners, who apply for building approval plans.

Despite being part of the Urban Development Department (UDD), the BDA has not taken measures to facilitate hassle-free process of construction plan approval. Unlike the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), which has an online system, the BDA continues to rely on a traditional and cumbersome offline process.

Surya Kiran, a spokesperson of Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout Open Forum said the process takes months, far exceeding the mandated 21-day timeline. "The BDA lacks an online platform for submitting and tracking building plan approvals, leading to significant delays and inefficiencies. Applicants are required to visit the BDA office multiple times, submit hard copies of documents, and often face unnecessary delays and demands. There are allegations of corruption among the BDA officials who demand bribes to speed up the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Handmade candles

Scented candle making & pressed flower holder: Hands-on workshop where you`ll learn the art of creating beautiful pressed flower candle holders and handcrafted scented candles. **Where: Paint Cafe Studio: Bengaluru; When: Until December 29**

02 New magic tricks

Start 2025 with mind-blowing tricks, crazy stunts, and endless laughs! Featuring Jayant, the 14-year-old magician who's full of surprises.
Where: Awesome Place: Mantri Square Mall
When: December 29, 6 pm

03 Art journey

Art exhibition- 'Namma Mestru: The Artistic Voyage of JMS Mani' (1948-2021) curated by Darshan Kumar YU & Amrutha R, Dy Curator, NGMA Bengaluru. **Where: National Gallery of Modern Art, Palace Road; When: Until January 1, 2025, 10 am to 6 pm**

04 Political play

Set in an atmosphere of swaying political loyalties, 'Mukhyamantri' follows the protagonist who is intent on retaining his position through the approaching elections. **Where: Ranga Shankara, JP Nagar When: December 31, 7:30 pm**

05 Act on spot

Improvise, captivate, and act on the spot! A stage where spontaneity meets creativity, challenging you to deliver impromptu acting brilliance in just two minutes. **Where: Small World, Koramanagala When: Until January 5**

Clouds about to take a rain check in city

Weathermen say this is likely to be final spell of rain, next week may be sunny as we ring in the new year; you can expect foggy skies during early mornings

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As the year draws to a close, the city has been experiencing cloudy weather with light drizzles on Thursday. Meteorological experts suggest that this could be the final spell of rain for the year, with next week likely to remain dry—a welcome sign for those planning to travel or throw a New Year bash.

Rajavel Manickam, a scientist at the IMD, explained, "The well-marked low-pressure area over the Southwest and adjoining Westcentral Bay of Bengal, near the South Andhra Pradesh-North Tamil Nadu coasts, has moved westward and weakened into a low-pressure area as of 5.30 am IST on December 26. The associated cyclonic circulation now extends up to 3.1 km above sea level. As a result, dry weather is expected to prevail across the state, with only light rain likely in isolated areas of Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Uttara Kannada, Raichur, Vijayapura, Koppal, Bagalkot, Belagavi, and Ballari districts." He said for now, we may expect a partly cloudy sky, with fog or mist in some areas at dawn. "Maximum and minimum temperatures are forecast to be around 27°C and 20°C, respectively."

Mango cultivation

The rainfall in November and December induced by an inclement weather phenomenon might have had an effect on the next year's mango harvest.

Experts said that while rainfall caused soil moisture issues, the lack of adequate rainfall has also become a concern, leaving farmers anxious about the prospects of this year's harvest.

Citizens stop for a quick selfie in the drizzle at Church Street on Thursday

Despite rainfall in areas like Chikkaballapura in September, November, and December, mango trees have not yet begun to bloom. Typically, these trees would show signs of flowering by November and December, but this year, such signs are notably absent.

Some trees have started budding, but experts warn that while this might not pose significant issues, the prevalence of diseases could reduce the overall quality and yield of the crop.

Experts said that the changing climate has caused considerable disruption to mango farming. Traditionally, mangoes were a highly profitable crop, but now, protecting and managing the trees has become a significant challenge for farmers. The North East monsoon rain has resulted in soil moisture levels remaining high. This extended moisture could lead to delays in flowering, as observed in the 2022 mango season, potentially extending the crop cycle.

> **"Dry weather is expected to prevail across the state. Maximum and minimum temperatures may be around 27°C and 20°C** – Rajavel Manickam, IMD

Experts warn that if the delay continues into the pre-monsoon months, diseases like fruit rot and anthracnose could spread, severely affecting the harvest quality. Mango trees are also under threat from several pests and diseases, such as the mango weevil, flower bud rot, and sap-sucking bugs. To prevent such damage, farmers are advised to spray recommended pesticides at the right stages of flowering.

Tech for wildlife: 3D printed prosthetics, GPS tracking and more...

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The city is emerging as a hub for wildlife innovation, adopting advanced technologies to ensure the well-being of its rich biodiversity. From 3D printing prosthetics to employing GPS tracking and AI-powered systems, the city has been setting new standards in wildlife conservation and treatment.

The People for Animals (PfA) Wildlife Hospital recently used 3D printing to create custom prosthetic limbs for birds and animals. Recently, a peacock and a crane received 3D-printed prosthetic legs, enabling them to regain mobility. Macaques with amputated limbs are also benefiting from these innovative solutions. Dr. Navaz Shariff, Chief Wildlife Veterinarian at PfA Wildlife Hospital, said, "3D printing has opened up incredible opportunities in wildlife treatment. It allows us to design and implement solutions that were previously unimaginable."

In addition to 3D printing, advanced medical technologies are enhancing treatment options for injured wildlife.

Laser therapy, for instance, is being used to treat snakes with vertebral cord fractures, offering a non-invasive recovery solution. Similarly, titanium plates are employed to stabilise the fractured shells of pond terrapins, aiding their rehabilitation.

Each species requires a unique approach, and technology is enabling precision care, he said. Dr. Shariff highlighted the use of GoPro video recorders as another innovative tool. Placed inside enclosures, these devices provide live-stream footage of animal behaviour, offering valuable insights into their activities, interactions, and recovery progress.

> **"3D printing has opened up big opportunities in wildlife treatment. It allows us to implement unimaginable solutions** – Dr Navaz Shariff, PfA

Aiding conservation efforts

Conservation efforts are also benefiting from technological advancements. GPS collars and tags are being used to monitor animal movements, study migration patterns, and identify areas prone to human-wildlife conflict. This data-driven approach helps conservationists develop targeted strategies to mitigate risks. Artificial intelligence (AI) and drones are further boosting conservation initiatives. AI-powered systems analyse images from camera traps to identify species and detect potential threats, while drones monitor wildlife populations and habitat health.

Additionally, wildlife-friendly infrastructure, such as bridges and tunnels, is being introduced to reduce human-animal conflicts in vulnerable areas. "Technology is not a replacement for care but an enabler to extend the best possible care to our wildlife," said Dr. Shariff.

A prosthetic leg fitted on an injured peacock at PfA

Scam in PM Kisan app's guise is back in the game

Police officials urge caution before clicking on this link circulating on social media

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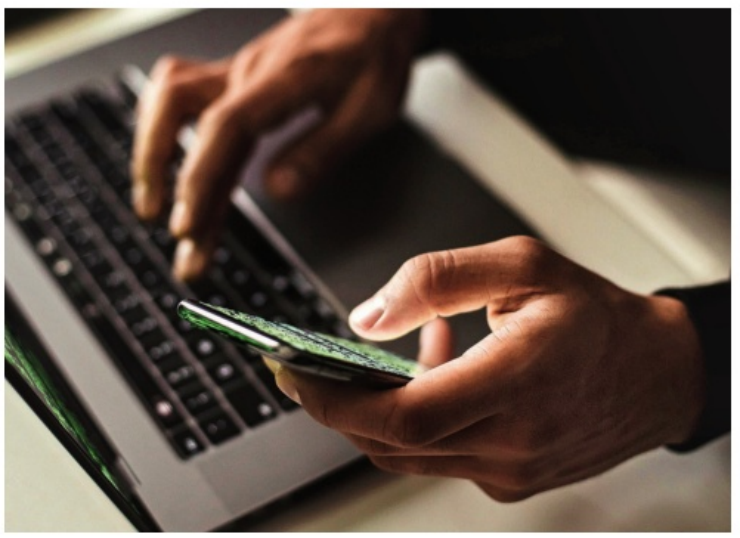

Fraud related to APK (Android Package Kit) and OTP (One-Time Password) may have declined, but a new menace has emerged. Fraudsters have once again begun circulating fake links to a purported 'PM Kisan' app, ensnaring the vulnerable.

Bengaluru reported 1,860 cases of APK and OTP-related cybercrimes in 2022, accounting for a significant chunk of digital fraud. These numbers fell to 1,334 in 2023 and 893 in 2024, due to increased awareness campaigns and enforcement by the Cyber Crime Cell. However, police have warned about the resurfacing of fake PM Kisan apps.

A fraudulent APK link has been circulating on social media, claiming to be the official PM Kisan Yojana app. If anybody clicks on the link, they are prompted to download a malicious application that allows fraudsters to gain unauthorised access to their phones.

This could lead to phone hacking, data theft, and financial losses as sensitive information such as banking details and passwords can be stolen.

The fraudulent links are being shared across platforms like Facebook, WhatsApp, and other social media channels. Fraudsters often prey on farmers by claiming that the app will expedite financial transfers or offer additional benefits under the PM Kisan Yojana. Many farmers are not well-versed in identifying digital threats and are thus vulnerable to such scams.

However, recently a traffic official in the city almost fell victim to the scam. "I didn't lose anything as I was alerted by friends who informed me about the suspicious link being circulated. The moment I found out, I updated my status, warning others not to download the APK file and shared the message with all my contacts. Most people are now aware of such scams and are cautious. While I'm still unsure how it happened, I immediately reported it to the cybercrime department and requested the link to be taken down."

Once the link is clicked, the APK file is downloaded to the phone. The app then takes control of the phone's functions, enabling hackers to steal valuable personal data and use it for financial fraud. In some cases, hackers also install further malware, causing long-term damage to the phone's security.

In mid-October, a traveller, Bhargavii Mani, lost nearly ₹1 lakh while trying to book a lounge access at the Bengaluru airport. Scammers, posing as customer care, tricked her into downloading an APK file via WhatsApp and granting screen mirroring access during a video call. They used this to siphon ₹87,125 to a PhonePe account, with further transactions blocked by her spending limit. Mani reported the fraud to the Cyber Crime Cell.

A senior CEN police official told BM, "We advise everyone to be cautious when it comes to downloading apps or clicking on unknown links. The government has official platforms for the distribution of benefits, and no third-party apps should be trusted,"

The officials stressed on the importance of verifying any files downloaded from the Play Store and ensuring the authenticity of suspected cybercrime incidents. For instance, some cases might involve accidental money transfers rather than deliberate fraud.

Citizens are urged to report cybercrime incidents immediately by calling the dedicated helpline number 1930.

Trampoline accident

A 16-year-old boy suffered a leg fracture while playing at the trampoline facility on the fourth floor of a mall in Rajajinagar, on Thursday. The boy's father, Patrick Kumar, has lodged a formal complaint with the Subrahmanya Nagar police, leading to the registration of an FIR against the mall authorities According to Kumar, several safety lapses contributed to the accident. The staff at the facility allegedly provided improper first aid, worsening the injury. **BMB**

Escaping goon shot at

The Attibele police opened fire on a rowdy-sheeter on Thursday after he allegedly attacked a police constable while attempting to flee. The accused, identified as Sunil, is a wanted criminal with over eight cases against him, including murder, and had been evading arrest, according to officials. Acting on a tip-off, the police arrived at the location to apprehend Sunil when he attempted to escape. **BMB**

Tragedy on tracks

A train ran over two men who were allegedly sitting on the railway track and drinking near Binnipete railway gate on Wednesday. The deceased have been identified as Surya (23), a construction worker, and Sharath (27), an employee at Flipkart involved in loading and unloading stocks. In another incident, a 19-year-old girl was killed after slipping and falling from a moving train in KSR railway station on Wednesday. According to the police she had got down to buy fruits and had her earphones on. She tried to board the train in a hurry as it started to move and slipped. **BMB**

BM Food & Night Life

Some quirky eats and traditions of NYE around the world

While enough has been said, done and written about the best and most iconic New Year's Eve parties worldwide, the most extravagant fireworks displays and the most scenic places to be, there are some quirky, fun and age-old traditions across the world, which you can partake in this year, if you're ringing in 2025 in any one of these countries.

Smashing idea

Smash a plate for good luck! At midnight, get to a friend's home and smash a plate at the doorstep for good luck. Make sure you don't use your best china in all the excitement though!

Load up on lentils

So Brazilians have come up with a great way to ring in the New Year – one

which is healthy and brings good luck. Eat lentils as you usher in the year ahead, for good luck and prosperity!

Heard it through the grapevine

Keep 12 grapes handy in a bowl beside you. As the clock strikes twelve, for every chime, pop a grape in your mouth. Chomp on them for a delicious snack, as well as for good luck in the months ahead.

Ring it in

Take along a pair of earplugs! Jokes aside, on New Year's Eve, the Japanese ring bells to herald in the New Year, not once, not twice, but a whopping 108 times! With all those bells, if you're unprepared, it can get a bit overwhelming.

Some bad juju

You might want to carry an umbrella along. You see, Puerto Ricans have a tradition of chucking buckets of water out of their windows, to get rid of the bad 'juju' of the previous year. So if you're walking past, you don't want any of that juju on you! **– Femina**

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Poultry shop raises hell near apartment complex

Residents of flats in Konappana Agrahara have yet again petitioned authorities after repeated pleas yielded no results

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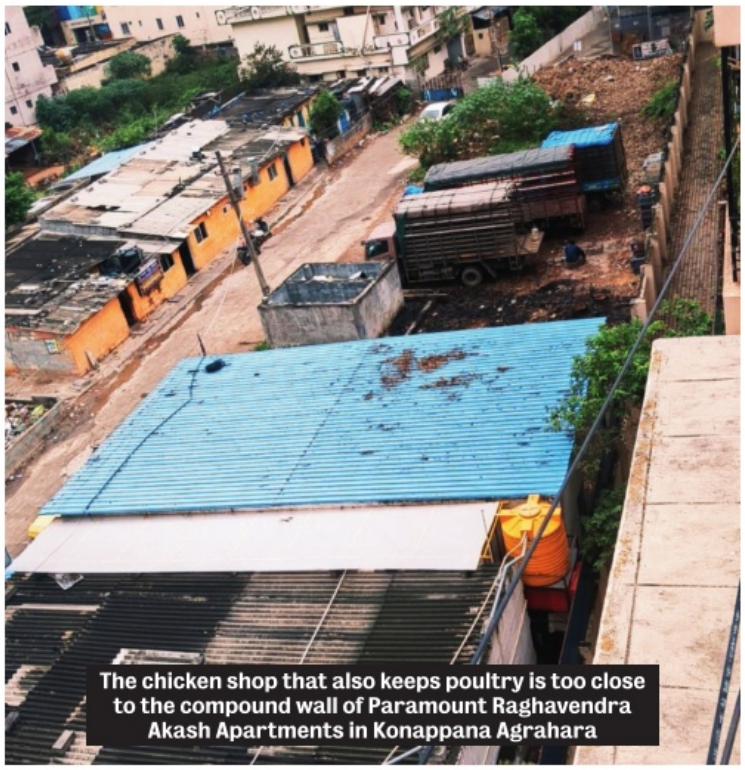
Residents of Paramount Raghavendra Akash Apartments in Konappana Agrahara are worried about health and sanitation issues created in the area due to a poultry shop located adjacent to their society. The residents allege the shop's improper waste management practices have turned the neighbourhood into a hotspot for pests.

According to a formal complaint submitted to authorities, the shop dumps waste behind its premises, which is too close to the apartment's compound wall. Crates placed near the wall attract flies and pests, while a window at the back of the shop allows foul odour to permeate the apartment premises. They said that the livestock stored directly behind the shop faces the apartment's windows.

"The situation becomes unbearable during weekends," said Rajesh, president of Paramount Raghavendra Akash apartments. "The stench is so strong that it's impossible to open windows or even step outside. Children can fall ill and it may cause respiratory problems," he said. The apartment residents said that frequent illnesses are reported. They said numerous attempts to resolve the issue directly with the shop owner also haven't worked.



The chicken shop that also keeps poultry is too close to the compound wall of Paramount Raghavendra Akash Apartments in Konappana Agrahara

Legal and regulatory violations

Residents allege that the poultry centre lacks the legally required No Objection Certificate (NOC) from nearby residents for operating in a residential area. Such an NOC is mandatory under regulations governing establishments that handle livestock and meat.

Over the past two years, residents have lodged multiple grievances with local authorities, urging action against the shop. Copies of these complaints, submitted along with the latest petition, reveal a pattern of negligence.

"We have raised many times to the panchayat office and health inspector on this. We have been following it up for more than 3-4 years, but no action was taken," said Vijay, secretary of Paramount Raghavendra Akash Apartments.

Urgent call for action

The residents have now escalated the matter, demanding that authorities take immediate steps to relocate the shop to a non-residential area. In their letter written to the health department of Konapana Agrahara on November 24, they emphasised the seriousness of the issue, citing its impact on their quality of life and health.

"This has been an issue for the past five years. Since we took over, we issued a notice to the shop. We will resolve the issue soon – Prashanth Harijan, BBMP

"The poultry shop has made our daily life very difficult. For many years we have kept complaining about this. They send notices, two members come and inspect and later again it is back to square one. There is no proper solution to this. If it were just a meat shop it wouldn't stink so much, but it's the livestock. They dump the waste nearby, which is why flies keep coming and we can't open the door to our balconies. We expect authorities will prioritise the well-being of the community and take action swiftly," said another resident.

Prashanth K Harijan, Health Inspector of BBMP, Konappana Agrahara, told BM the issue dates back to when the area was under the gram panchayat. "This has been an issue for the past five years. Since we have taken over, we have issued a notice to the shop. We will ensure that the matter is resolved within two to three days," he said.

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Where to walk?

Sarjapur

The state of the footpaths along Sarjapur Main Road is appalling and there is no space to walk.

Remove the cart

Hebbal

A petty shop near the old police station in Hebbal has encroached on the footpath, forcing pedestrians to walk on the road. Despite repeated complaints to BBMP, no action has been taken, putting public safety at risk.

Cheemasandra hillock to turn into green sanctuary

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Once a degraded hillock covered with plastic waste, Cheemasandra in East Bengaluru is now on its way to becoming a thriving green space, driven by an ambitious project by an environmental organisation. Launched in October 2023, the project aims to transform the 5.2-acre wasteland into a dense forest that not only restores the ecological balance but also enhances community well-being.

Karnataka generates around 11,085 tonnes of solid waste daily, much of which is dumped in the state's 191 existing dumpsites. These unmanaged landfills pose serious environmental risks, including groundwater contamination from toxic leachate. Against this backdrop, they took up the challenge of reclaiming the Cheemasandra site by SayTrees.

The project employs innovative techniques like the Modified Miyawaki method, which ensures rapid afforestation by planting native species densely. Over 44,500 saplings have already been planted at the site, making it one of Bengaluru's largest urban forest initiatives.

"We are creating not just a forest but a space that will provide cleaner air, reduce urban heat, and support biodiversity," Deokant Payasi, CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of SayTrees.

Years of neglect had turned the soil barren, while layers of plastic waste rendered the land inhospitable for vegetation. The site was laden with non-biodegradable materials that required meticulous clearing and proper disposal. Long-term abandonment had left the soil infertile, demanding innovative soil enrichment techniques, including the addition of nutrient-rich organic matter. Initial scepticism from local stakeholders needed to be addressed through consistent engagement and awareness campaigns. SayTrees adopted the Modified Miyawaki method, a technique known for creating dense forests in a short time. Over 44,500 saplings of native species were planted, ensuring rapid afforestation and biodiversity. The result is a thriving green space that not only absorbs carbon but also supports various forms of flora and fauna.

Top: The situation of the hillock prior to the cleaning; above the transformed site

"The project was a collaborative effort, bringing together corporate partners, local communities, and environmental enthusiasts. Beyond ecological restoration, the reclaimed land has been designed with community well-being in mind. Once the forest matures, it will offer cleaner air, shade, and a natural habitat for biodiversity," Payasi said.

Reclaiming dumpsites like Cheemasandra is part of a broader movement to address the waste management crisis. The project highlights techniques that can be replicated elsewhere. Bioremediation involves excavating legacy waste and promoting aerobic decomposition to reduce leachate contamination and restore soil health. Native planting initiatives focus on using a mix of native species to create a self-sustaining and biodiverse forest, while community involvement has been crucial, with volunteers and residents actively participating in site cleanup, sapling planting, and promoting waste management awareness.

Payasi added, "Through such initiatives, we are combating climate change by enhancing carbon sequestration. Promote biodiversity by creating habitats for flora and fauna. Improve community health by reducing urban heat islands and air pollution. Every sapling planted is a step toward combating climate change and building resilience in our cities."

NYE updates

All hands on deck to stop drugs

Railway officials say sniffer dogs, random checks, inspections already in place to ensure no banned substances get in via trains before NYE

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Railway stations in city witness high passenger, cargo volumes keeping officials on their toes (file)

As Bengaluru prepares for New Year celebrations, law enforcement agencies are stepping up efforts to curb the influx of narcotics into the city, with a particular focus on railway routes. A quantity of ganja was seized at the KSR Railway Station on Wednesday, and the case has been handed over to the Excise Department, which is conducting further investigations, according to sources. This seizure has prompted the railway police to enhance vigilance, aiming to prevent further instances of drug trafficking.

The festive season has in the past too seen a surge in smuggling activities, with trains being a preferred mode of transport for traffickers due to the high passenger and cargo volumes. To tackle this, authorities have implemented strict checks at the entry and exit points of railway stations, bus terminals, and other public spaces. Enhanced surveillance measures are expected to deter smugglers.

Higher police officials noted that a lot of precautions have been taken. Sniffer dogs and police checks are being deployed at public gatherings, bus stations, railway stations, key locations, and venues hosting parties to ensure surveillance and prevent any misuse or incidents.

Shreyans Chinchawade, Senior Divisional Security Commissioner of the Railway Protection Force, told BM that with the festive season bringing in heavy crowds, the railway police are deploying maximum resources, conducting random inspections, and maintaining heightened vigilance.

"All railway personnel have been put on high alert, and duty hours have been extended. Sniffer dog squads, including six dogs, have been stationed at major stations, including Yeshwanthpur, KR Puram, Sir M Visvesvaraya Terminal (SMVT), and KSR Bengaluru Railway Station. Regular and routine checks are being conducted at these key junctions. In light of the festive rush, we are thoroughly screening passengers to ensure safety," he said.

> **Sniffer dog squads have been stationed at major stations; we are screening passengers too**
>
> —Shreyans C, RPF

Sourcing from different states

Recent crackdowns have revealed that the banned substances enter the city from various states. In a recent operation, the Central Crime Branch (CCB) dismantled a drug network allegedly run by a jailed dealer, seizing contraband worth ₹71 lakh, including MDMA crystals and hydro ganja sourced from Kerala. Meanwhile, Assam police busted an inter-state drug racket, arresting two individuals, including a Manipur police officer, and seizing one lakh Yaba tablets valued at ₹2,000-₹2,500 each in Bengaluru. The tablets, a methamphetamine-caffeine mix, originated from Moreh near the India-Myanmar border and were intended for distribution in the city.

Public cooperation

During a recent meeting held by the Home Minister with the senior police officials special emphasis was placed on preventing drug trafficking and other illegal activities for New Year's Eve. Enhanced patrolling, strict checks at entry points, and monitoring of suspicious activities are among the measures being implemented.

Authorities also urged citizens to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activities, particularly in and around railway stations. Officials stressed that community involvement is crucial in curbing the menace of drug trafficking.

Sorry folks, you can't ring in New Year at Nandi Hills

Nandi Hills will be out of bounds for new year revellers. A ban on entry to Nandi Hills will be in effect from 6 pm on December 31 to 7 am on January 1, 2025. Though visitors may access the Nandi after the restricted hours on January 1, they can expect to encounter large crowds. Bengaluru Rural district administration and police department have put in place strict precautionary measures, with limitations also imposed on hotels, resorts, and homestays.

An official said, "Restrictions have been imposed due to concerns over drunk driving, accidents, and pollution and to maintain law and order. Strict guidelines have also been set for celebrations at hotels and resorts. Authorities have issued directives for everyone to adhere to these rules, and any violations will be dealt with accordingly."

PN Ravindra, Deputy Commissioner of Bengaluru Rural District, said, "With an expected influx of 25,000 to 30,000 tourists and 5,000 to 6,000 vehicles, controlling the crowd has become a significant challenge. Visitors often engage in drinking, smoking, and unruly behavior, prompting the authorities to impose a ban on public access..."

On room bookings

Room bookings for December 31 have been cancelled too at Nandi Giri Dham. Authorities have instructed police to maintain adequate security around the area. Hotels, resorts, and homestays in the vicinity have also been instructed to enforce strict rules for New Year's celebrations.

Hotels, resorts, and homestays around the Nandi Hills area have seen a significant surge in bookings. Rooms have been reserved well in advance, and many hotels are already full. Several resorts and hotels have announced special New Year packages.

Traffic alert

The district's tourist sites are expected to see heavy crowds. The newly popular Isha Yoga Centre is expected to attract thousands of visitors, alongside traditional spots like Bhoganandhi. Other tourist locations such as Shwar Temple, Rangasthala, Avalabetta, Kailasgiri, and others are also expected to draw large crowds. Meanwhile, several major lakes in the district, including Srinivas Sagar, Jakkalamadagu, and Amani Bairasagar, have become popular picnic spots, and many tourists are expected to visit these locations as well.

—Sridhar Vivan

Demolition dust: City produces 4,500 MT of C&D waste daily

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Bengaluru is often ridiculed as 'dusty city' as the city goes vertical. There has been a trend of demolishing old houses and constructing new homes. Now, it has been revealed that the city produces a record 4,500 metric tonnes (MT) of Construction and Demolition (C and D) waste on a daily basis.

This was revealed by Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar in a response at the Assembly. "The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is implementing a public-private partnership (PPP) model to manage the collection, transportation, and processing of construction and demolition waste in Bengaluru. This initiative follows the 'Polluter Pays' principle and is structured under seven tender packages, with three packages focused on collection and transportation, and four covering collection, transportation, processing, and disposal. It is estimated that around 4,500 metric tons of construction and demolition waste are generated daily within BBMP limits," he said.

He said that currently, two processing units operating under the PPP model are responsible for processing 1,750 metric tonnes of waste each day. The first unit, located in Kannur Village (Survey No. 50), has a daily capacity of 750 metric tonnes. This unit is situated on a 10-acre BBMP-owned site with a 20-year permissive lease. The second unit is in Chikkajala and processes 1,000 metric tonnes of waste daily. This privately-owned facility has been approved by BBMP for handling construction and demolition waste.

> **2 units under PPP model take care of processing 1,750 MT of waste daily in city**

"Neither private companies receive any direct payments from BBMP for waste processing. These companies are permitted to charge ₹134 per tonne for processing demolition waste from private construction materials. BBMP does not impose any fees on construction waste producers for waste management services. To further enhance the city's waste management capacity, BBMP is planning to build four additional processing units, each with a 750 metric tonne capacity, on the outskirts of Bengaluru. The tender process for these new units is under way," Shivakumar added.

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Spotlight on meals served at govt hostels, residential schools

Social Welfare Dept introduces audit system for its residential schools catering to SC/ST students after getting many complaints about quality of meals served

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Officials said they were constantly getting complaints that the government had fixed a menu, but different meals were being given to the students at the hostels

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) of Karnataka has introduced an innovative social audit system to ensure transparency and quality in the meals served at government-run hostels and residential schools. The initiative involves sharing pictures of the meals provided, along with the menu chart and kitchen cleanliness, on the social media platform three times a day.

The pilot project, launched on December 1, covers 293 institutions in the districts of Bidar, Raichur, and Chamarajanagar. These institutions include hostels and Karnataka Residential Educational Institutions Society (KREIS) schools catering to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students.

Karnataka Residential Educational Institutions Society (KREIS) schools and SWD hostels play a crucial role in providing quality Education and Residential Facilities to students from marginalised communities specially Schedule Caste Communities. By leveraging technology and social media for real-time updates will enable better monitoring and public engagement.

Nagaraj Pujar, Officer on Special Duty to the Principal Secretary of Social Welfare Department, said the initiative was launched after repeated complaints about discrepancies in the meals served. "We were constantly getting complaints that the government had fixed a menu, but different meals were being given to the students. As part of the pilot, hostel wardens and KREIS school authorities are required to post four photos daily on platform X. One showing the menu chart, another of the kitchen, one of the food plate, and a fourth showing students eating together. Once they post, it will be on a public platform. This enhances transparency for everyone, including parents who can see the meals their children are eating," Pujar added.

The SWD also created a dashboard on its website, where all the social media handles of these institutions are listed. This allows parents and stakeholders to easily access the pictures and provide feedback.

Focus on backward districts

The pilot project focuses on the districts of Bidar, Raichur, and Chamarajanagar as they had the highest number of complaints. "The idea is to take backward districts as more complaints were coming from these areas," Pujar said.

> **"Wardens and authorities must post four photos daily on platform X, showing the menu, the kitchen, the plate, students eating**
> – Nagaraj Pujar, Social Welfare Department

The SWD provides in-house cooked meals to nearly five lakh students in 2,500 institutions across Karnataka, including 1,900 hostels and 800 KREIS schools. These meals are served three times a day.

Since the launch of the initiative, the department has received encouraging feedback. "We are getting feedback from people that we are providing balanced meals. Previously, there was no check, but now we are receiving positive responses. The department plans to expand the initiative to 10 more districts by January 2025 and aims to cover all 30 districts eventually," Pujar added.

The initiative, which started taking shape in October, is expected to bring accountability to the system. "This is just the beginning. By January first week, we plan to extend this to another 10 districts and eventually cover all 30 districts," Pujar said.

He said the primary objectives of the initiative are to provide real-time visibility into the quality and consistency of meals served, ensuring transparency and accountability in the process.

Stop this ride, we want to get off

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

turn into venting spots with a flood of complaints about overcharging, harassment, and aggressive behaviour by drivers. One user on X called for drivers to move away from ride-hailing aggregators, saying, "Bengaluru auto drivers should reclaim their agency from broker aggregators and serve commuters on metered fares honestly and professionally. I want more drivers to use their regulatory-approved fare meter and escape the clutches of opaque aggregators."

Don't want to go there

In 2023, 1,537 cases of auto drivers refusing to go for hire were reported, with Rs.7,34,900 collected in fines. This increased to 3,138 cases in 2024, resulting in fines amounting to Rs.16,44,000.

Recently a video surfaced showing a woman in the city being harassed and slapped by an cab driver after she canceled a ride. The woman, who shared the video on X, captured the driver arguing aggressively with her. When questioned about his behaviour, he retorted, "Does your father pay for the gas?" The video sparked widespread outrage.

Despite efforts to regulate fares and ensure passenger safety, the increasing reliance on ride-hailing apps has added complexity to the issue. The gap between regulatory oversight and aggregator policies has created an environment where disputes are becoming more common.

Auto and Taxi Drivers' Union president M Manjunath explained that earlier, there were awareness programmes for auto drivers, ensuring they understood traffic rules and regulations. "However, with many new drivers entering the system now, there seems to be a lack of knowledge about basic rules. This raises the question—who is responsible? Is it the auto unions, the RTO, or the Traffic Department? When we question ourselves, we realise we share the blame because these are our drivers. If we ask the authorities, they often point fingers at the drivers for creating the issue," he said.

No support for drivers

Another major concern is the lack of government support. There are no proper schemes or benefits for auto drivers or their families, be it in education or health. Even when new schemes are introduced, they often lack funding. Basic measures, such as providing auto loans at lower interest rates, are not happening, he said.

" As a result, many drivers feel forced to demand extra money just to meet their daily needs," he said. However, he urged auto drivers to refrain from overcharging passengers. "To address these issues, we are planning to conduct an awareness program for auto drivers in January," he said.

Law enforcement officials point to available forums for grievance redressal. A senior traffic official said, "If auto-rickshaw drivers demand excessive fares, passengers are encouraged to call 112 for immediate assistance. To report cases of auto refusals, the Bengaluru Traffic Police website offers a dedicated helpline. Complaints can be submitted with details, and necessary investigations will follow."

Manmohan Singh, architect of India's economic reforms, dies

Former prime minister Manmohan Singh, the architect of India's economic reforms, died here on Thursday night. He was 92.

Singh's death was announced by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi, where he was admitted in the Emergency ward around 8.30 PM in a critical condition.

An AIIMS bulletin said "he was treated for age related medical conditions and had sudden loss of consciousness at home" on December 26.

"Resuscitative measures were started immediately at home. He was brought to medical emergency at AIIMS Delhi at 8.06 pm. Despite all efforts, he could not be revived and was declared dead at 9.51 pm," said the bulletin.

Singh, who was prime minister for two terms in the Congress-led UPA government from 2004 to 2014, had been in poor health for the last few months. He is survived by wife Gurcharan Singh and three daughters.

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and her mother Sonia Gandhi reached the hospital as soon as the news of his hospitalisation became known. Singh, who was finance minister under the then prime minister P V Narasimha Rao, was the architect and the brainchild of economic reforms in 1991 that pulled India from the brink of bankruptcy and ushered in an era of economic liberalisation that is widely believed to have changed the course of India's economic trajectory.

Singh died as the Congress party concluded its Congress Working Committee meeting at Belagavi in Karnataka, where all top party leaders were present.

It is believed that party chief Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi are on their way to Delhi from Belagavi.

In April this year, Manmohan Singh retired from Rajya Sabha, with Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge praising his long parliamentary career.

As the two-term Prime Minister of the UPA, he stayed at the top post from 2004 and 2014, and served as a member of the Rajya Sabha till early this year. He represented Assam for five terms in the Upper House and shifted to Rajasthan in 2019. His last intervention in Parliament was against demonetisation, describing it as an "organised loot and legalised plunder". — PTI

Shawl and garland for rowdy sheeter: Latest letter bomb

Anonymous letter reveals despite DCP's order to keep vigil on goon, inspector rolled out the red carpet for him

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The number of anonymous letters and ongoing inquiries against police inspectors has cast a shadow over the Bengaluru police. Now, coming on top of this is the latest shocker.

An anonymous letter has been sent to the Commissioner of Police against Electronic City Police Inspector Naveen GM and police head constable Srisaila and police constable Muthuraj Babu Lamani for felicitating Prabhakar Reddy, a rowdy-sheeter at the police station.

The felicitation was done despite a clear order from Deputy Commissioner of Police (South East) in a circular on August 29, 2024 to keep a vigil on Prabhakar Reddy, the son of Ramareddy of Mylasandra Village of Begur. The DCP directed the police inspector to take preventive measures against Prabhakar Reddy who continues to participate in anti-social activities. The DCP directed the police inspector to produce Prabhakar before him but the police inspector is said to have felicitated Prabhakar and his friend Ravi (two cases were registered at Electronics City Police Station against him) after taking Rs 2 lakh from the accused between 2 pm and 3 pm on October 11. The Police Inspector felicitated the rowdy-sheeter with a garland and a shawl.

Video grab of the incident at Electronic City police station

Inquiry ordered against inspector, constables after latest allegation rocks police force

The anonymous letter stated that Police Inspector Naveen has been collecting money from Bangladeshis in and around the Electronic City. "The police inspector has engaged a person to collect money from Bangladeshis. There are around 200 paying guest accommodations and he is collecting Rs 1,500 from each PG and Rs 5,000 from co-living PG, Rs 1,000 from each garbage truck. He is not sparing bars and restaurants, petrol pumps and others," the anonymous letter read.

BM tried to reach out to Electronic City Police Inspector Naveen, but he was not available for comments.

Meanwhile, the Assistant Commissioner of Police (Electronic City) confirmed that they have received the anonymous letter against Electronic City Police Station Inspector and a few police constables. "The inquiry has been ordered against the Police Inspector and police constables," the ACP said.

Previous inquiries

An inquiry was recently conducted by the Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) against the Police Inspector and some police constables of Ramamurthy Nagar Police Station. The ACP conducted the inquiry and suspended the Police Inspector and police constables. It is rumoured that police constables who sent or prepared the unanimous letter were also transferred from Ramamurthy Nagar Police Station.

Recently, an anonymous letter was also sent to the Commissioner of Police and other authorities against a police constable on special branch duty at Byatarayanapura Police Station. The Deputy Commissioner of Police (West) has ordered an inquiry by the jurisdictional ACP. Bangalore Mirror wrote on December 19 about how Hitendra, a police constable on special branch duty, has been harassing and embarrassing an assistant sub-inspector and police constables.

Illegal parcels: African corn snake, Ethiopian lizard, python in the box

Exotic reptiles found in train that arrived at SMVT station

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A routine inspection at the SMVT Railway Station on Tuesday led to the discovery of exotic wildlife being smuggled via the GHY-SMVB Express, which operates from Guwahati to Bengaluru three days in a week. The train that arrived at platform 4 at 12 pm, had three unauthorised cardboard boxes in its A1 coach, sources said.

Authorities found a steel cage containing an Ethiopian lizard in one of the boxes. The Wildlife Rescue Team was alerted, and further inspection revealed two more exotic species, a juvenile African corn snake and an adult Nigerian python. All three animals were handed over to the Yelahanka Range Forest Officer (RFO) team and later transferred to the Bannerghatta Biological Park for care and observation.

Officials noted that the source of these animals and the individuals behind the smuggling remain unidentified. However, sources revealed that in many instances, individuals arrange for exotic animals to be sourced and alert someone in advance to transport or hand them over. Although the boxes in this case did not bear any address, similar incidents in the past have involved someone being pre-notified to collect and deliver such packages to a designated person.

Exotic animals as pets

This incident has raised concerns about the growing trend of keeping exotic wildlife as pets, which is posing a threat to the local ecosystem.

Surya Sen, Executive Director of Bannerghatta Biological Park, said though there is growing craze among people to keep exotic animals as pets, many fail to provide the proper care and maintenance the animals require.

"These reptiles, being cold-blooded, are highly susceptible to weather changes and require careful quarantine and monitoring. Unfortunately, many do not survive, as seen during a previous large consignment where several animals died over time," he said. "People fail to understand the responsibility involved and lack the commitment to maintain these animals in the long run. This neglect not only leads to the suffering of the animals but also poses a threat to our local landscape," he stated.

The rescued animals are currently in quarantine at the Bannerghatta Zoo Hospital and are in a safe condition, officials confirmed..

HC can adjudicate election disputes over candidate's caste

The Karnataka High Court has determined that the state's 1990 Act concerning reservations for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes does not restrict the High Court's authority to adjudicate election disputes regarding a candidate's caste status in Legislative Assembly matters.

Justice Anant Ramanath Hegde rejected an application filed under Order VII Rule 11 of the Civil Procedure Code by B Devendrappa, who sought to dismiss G Swamy's election petition challenging his election. The original petition questioned Devendrappa's election to Jagalur Vidhanasabha Constituency, asserting that whilst the constituency was reserved for Scheduled Tribe candidates, Devendrappa belonged to Other Backward Community, thus making him ineligible.

Devendrappa argued that his caste certificate remained valid until cancelled by the District Caste Verification Committee (DCVC). He maintained that only the DCVC, established under the 1990 Act, could determine caste certificate validity, suggesting the election petition was inadmissible.

The petitioner's counsel contested this, asserting that under the Representation of the People Act, 1951, the High Court held exclusive jurisdiction over such matters. The bench acknowledged Jagalur Assembly Constituency's reservation for Scheduled Tribe candidates, noting that if the petitioner proved the respondent's non-tribal status, the election would require nullification. —BMB

IN MALAYALAM AT : PVR - INOX CINEMAS {NEXUS FORUM MALL, KORMANGALA, 8:55, 7:15 p.m. | ORION MALL, YESHWANTPUR, 10:20 p.m. | VEGA CITY MALL, 9:30 a.m., 10:30 p.m. | PHOENIX MARKET CITY, K.R. PURAM, 3:40 p.m. | BHARTIYA CITY, 10:00 p.m. | MSR ELEMENTS MALL, 9:30, 6:25 p.m. | AURA PARK SQUARE, WHITEFIELD, 4:00 p.m. | NEXUS WHITEFIELD ROAD, 10:20 p.m. | VR MALL, WHITEFIELD ROAD, 10:10 p.m. | SUPERPLEX FALCON CITY, 11:50 a.m. | GARUDA MALL, 6:55 p.m. | MEGAPLEX MALL OF ASIA, 10:20 p.m. | LIDO, 4:00 p.m.} | CINEPOLIS CINEMAS {SHANTINIKETAN, 10:20 p.m. | SJR SPECTRUM MALL, 3:55, 10:30 p.m. | LULU MALL, 9:25, 3:40 p.m. | HSR, 10:30 p.m.} | GOPALAN CINEMAS {LEGACY MALL, 12:00 p.m. | GRAND MALL, 10:15 p.m. | SIGNATURE MALL, 7:00 p.m. | BANNERGHATTA ROAD, 10:30 p.m.} | ROCKLINE CINEMA MALL {JALAHALLI CROSS, 9:30 p.m.} | NEWFANGLED MINIPLEX {MG ROAD, 5:15 p.m.} | MOVIE TIME {YGR SIGNATURE MALL, RR NAGAR, 4:45 p.m.} | BALAJI DELUXE THEATRE {TAVAREKERE, 10:05, 10:00 p.m.}.
IN KANNADA AT : CINEPOLIS CINEMAS {HSR, 6:45 p.m.} | ROCKLINE CINEMA MALL {JALAHALLI CROSS, 1:30 p.m.}.
FARNAZ

Construction plans on BDA sites stuck in red tape

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

process,'' Surya Kiran said. He said that applicants who refuse to pay bribes are subjected to harassment, delays, and unnecessary demands. "The entire process lacks transparency, making it difficult for applicants to track the status of their applications,'' he said.

It is alleged that applicants (site owners who apply for construction plan approval) are often forced to use specific surveyors, civil engineers, or architects recommended by the BDA officials.

Venkateshappa J is a site owner who had to suffer due to this flaw in the process. He told BM that he was forced to wait for seven months even after paying the middleman.

"I applied for construction plan approval in April 2023 and I wanted it by June 2023 but the BDA officials gave the approved plan for construction in November. I ended up paying 3% extra interest on a housing loan availed from the SBI as I submitted the building construction plan late. I am having to pay 10.25% as interest instead of 7.25% on the housing loan,'' Venkateshappa said.

Pay more to applicants

The applicants are forced to pay Rs 20,000 to Rs 30,000 to the middlemen for pursuing the applications. They said that the online system could stop the middlemen who are exploiting them.

"The submission of applications online will oust the middlemen. It would also let applicants know about the progress of their applications without having to run from pillar to post,'' said Prashant, who owns a site at Visvesvaraya Layout.

BDA Engineering Member Shantarajanna said the BDA floated a tender inviting the bidder for developing the software for online platform for submitting applications online for construction plan approval in 2023 but cancelled it as per the direction from the higher authorities.

"The BDA decided to develop the software for the online platform at an estimated cost of Rs 9 crore but cancelled it as the e-governance department has a plan to develop the software for Urban Property Ownership Records (UPOR), a computerised process of land title registration.

We will migrate to UPOR as soon as the software is developed. The BBMP is also expected to migrate to UPOR,'' he said.

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, RUTA SANDEEP CHAUDHARI, W/o Raj Pradeep Talekar, R/o Block D, S-29, Sonestaa Iwoods, Green Glen Layout, Doddamma Devi Road, Bellandur, Bengaluru – 560103, have changed my name as RUTA CHAUDHARI, vide affidavit dated 25.12.2024, sworn before notary S. Subashini, Bengaluru.

I, MANJUNATHA, R/a.#19, 4th Cross, Mottappa Layout, Varanasi, KR. Puram Bangalore-36. I, have Changed my name to MANJUNATHA VENKATARAMANA Vide affidavit dated 23/12/2024 Sworn before Notary: R Basavaraja Bangalore

I Sathyanarayana S/O, Krishnaiah Samudralla R/o No 1060 Shanthavahanaru Road Near Srinagar Pipline Road Weavers Colony Srinagar Bangalore - 560050 have changed my name to Krishniah Sathyanarayan Samudralla.

I Shree Gowri, W/o, chakravarthi.K, R/o, No 689, 12th cross 26th main,1st sector, hhsr layout, bengaluru 560102. Havechangedmy name to, Shree Gowri Kaikondrahalli venkatesh for all purposes

I Toogar Kranti Kumar S/O,T.Mallaiah R/o B-603,Brigade Exotica,budigere Cross, Avalahalli, Bangalore-560049 have changed my name to Toogar Kranti for all purposes

I Vinodh Kumar S/O, Prakash.p R/o N0-07,ground Floor, astalakshmi Nilayam, 4th Cross, sharadamba Nagar, jalahalli Village, bengaluru-560013 have changed my name to Vinodhkumar.

I, Chaithanya, d/o S Raja R/o, No.164 2nd Cross Jambu Savari Dinne J P Nagar 8th Phase B'luru-560076 have changed my name to Chaithanya. R for all purposes.

I Badarinath S, S/O Sadananda Setty S,R/o D1217, Rajaaristos, Doddakammanahalli Road,,Hulimavu, Bangalore 560076 have changed my name to Badarinaath Singri .

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HEALTH TIP: Teens are more likely to open up about their feelings when they feel supported and understood, rather than judged

During pregnancy, the body's ability to metabolise caffeine slows down, meaning caffeine stays in your system longer

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What's brewing

Ultimate cold fighting detox teas for boosting immunity in winter

We are currently experiencing the peak of winter, which can be extremely cold, especially early in the mornings and later in the evenings. These weather conditions create the perfect setting for the cold and flu viruses to thrive. Staying healthy during these months is essential, and one of the best ways to protect your immune system is with a simple homemade, warming detox tea.

Here are some cold-fighting teas that can help keep you healthy and warm during the winter months:

Ginger and Lemon Tea

Ginger is known for its anti-inflammatory and immune-boosting properties, and lemon provides a good dose of vitamin C, helping to strengthen your immune system.

How to prepare: Boil water, add a few slices of fresh ginger, and let it steep for 5-10 minutes. Squeeze in fresh lemon juice and sweeten with honey if desired.

Turmeric and Honey Tea

Turmeric contains curcumin, which has strong anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, while honey soothes a sore throat and fights infection.

How to prepare: Boil water, add a teaspoon of turmeric powder, and let it simmer for a few minutes. Stir in honey to taste.

Peppermint Tea

Peppermint is a natural decongestant, helping to clear nasal passages and ease a sore throat. It also aids digestion and has a soothing effect.

How to prepare: Steep fresh peppermint leaves (or a peppermint tea bag) in hot water for 5-7 minutes.

Cinnamon and Clove Tea

Cinnamon and cloves both have antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties, which can help fight off infections and relieve cold symptoms.

How to prepare: Boil water and add a cinnamon stick and a few whole cloves. Let it steep for 5-10 minutes and sweeten with honey.

Lemon, Ginger, and Honey Tea

This powerful combination helps clear the sinuses, boost immunity, and soothe the throat.

How to prepare: Boil water with fresh ginger slices, then add lemon juice and honey after the tea has cooled slightly.

Green Tea with Lemon and Honey

Green tea contains antioxidants that help fight infections, and combined with lemon and honey, it becomes a powerful drink for fighting off colds.

How to prepare: Brew green tea and add lemon juice and honey to taste.

"Herbal teas are more than just a comforting remedy; they're a powerhouse of natural healing during the cold months. Blends like garlic, ginger, and cayenne offer an immune-boosting trifecta—garlic fights bacteria, ginger soothes digestion and pain, and cayenne clears mucus while promoting circulation," says Dr. Sippy Taneja, Chief Dietician, Ujala Cygnus Group of Hospitals. He shares some simple immune boosting teas that can be made at home in no time.

- From the calming properties of basil and ginger to the nutrient-rich goodness of nettle, dandelion, and catnip, herbal teas offer a versatile way to combat seasonal illnesses.
- Elderberry and lemon balm, meanwhile, provide a natural boost to the immune system, potentially shortening flu symptoms when caught early. The beauty of these remedies lies in their simplicity and effectiveness, proving that nature has always been a source of strength against common ailments. A warm cup of herbal tea isn't just a ritual—it's a step toward wellness.
- A decoction of Turmeric which contains curcumin & black pepper which contains piperine is a natural antibiotic. This reduces inflammation in body & soothes the digestion process as well.
- A warm chamomile tea during night relaxes the mind and help to reduce the anxiety.
- For those seeking a gentler option, olive leaf tea is packed with antioxidants and has been used historically to tackle fevers and infections. Each sip helps hydrate and heal, making these teas a fantastic ally in staying healthy this winter.

"As the winter months arrive, the need for warmth and rejuvenation grows. A soothing cup of detox tea, with ingredients like green tea, tulsi, mint, and lemongrass, can help cleanse the body and boost metabolism, making it the perfect remedy for sluggishness," says Parimal Shah, Founder & CEO, Cherise India Private Ltd who feels detox teas not only provide comfort but also promote overall wellness, especially during this season when our immune systems need support.

"Technology, too, plays a pivotal role in enhancing our tea experience. With the rise of smart tea solutions, enjoying a freshly brewed cup has become more convenient and customizable than ever. These innovations ensure that we can enjoy our health-boosting teas with ease, no matter where we are—whether at work, in a hospital, or at home," he adds.

Along with sipping your detox tea, remember to stay hydrated, eat nutrient-rich foods, get plenty of sleep, and wash your hands frequently to minimise the risk of illness.

Stay warm, stay healthy, and sip your way to wellness this winter!

—Femina

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Heart sound devices

Gamechangers

Wearable heart sound devices represent a groundbreaking shift in cardiac care, offering continuous, non-invasive monitoring with the potential to revolutionise the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cardiovascular conditions, according to a new study.

Cardiac issues a concern

Cardiovascular diseases remain a global health crisis, spurring an urgent demand for innovative diagnostic tools that enable early detection and effective treatment. These cutting-edge advancements promise to enhance patient care and outcomes by providing real-time insights into heart health, said researchers from the City University of Hong Kong.

Early detection, monitoring

"Our work on wearable heart sound devices marks a significant step forward in the early detection and monitoring of cardiovascular diseases," said Dr Bee Luan Khoo, Associate Professor at the City University of Hong Kong and a leading researcher in the field.

"These devices have the potential to provide more accurate, real-time cardiac health data, revolutionising the way we manage and understand heart health," Khoo added.

Traditional tools

Traditional tools, such as stethoscopes, have long been valuable for diagnosing cardiac issues but fall short when it comes to continuous monitoring.

Wearable technology emerges as a transformative solution, enabling persistent and real-time tracking of heart sounds. However, challenges such as sensitivity, comfort, and data accuracy still hinder widespread adoption, said the researchers.

These hurdles underscore the necessity of advancing wearable devices to overcome existing limitations and improve cardiovascular health monitoring on a global scale.

— IANS

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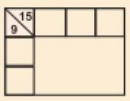
@BangaloreMirror

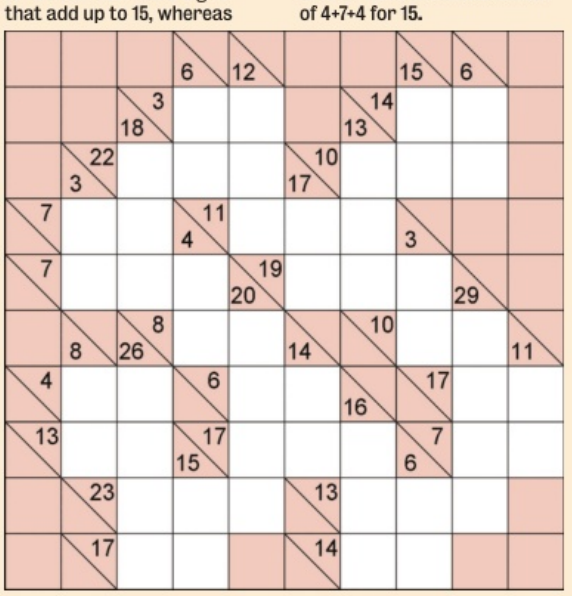
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

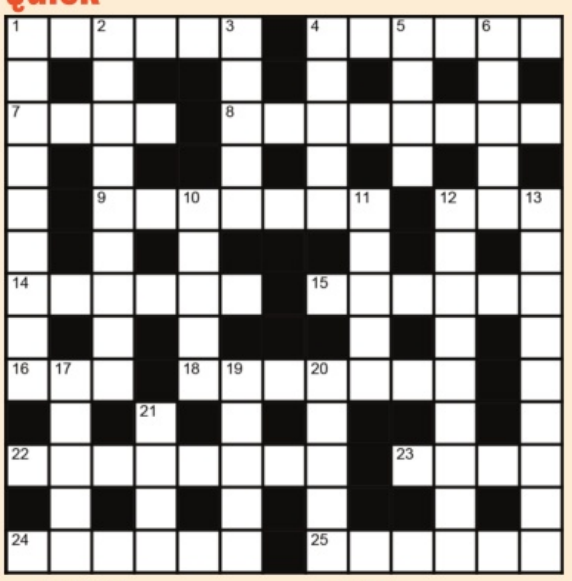


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Sad (6)
4 Natural well (6)
7 Mom's sister (4)
8 Upright (8)
9 By way of (7)
12 Mire (3)
14 Group of words (6)
15 Fails to catch? (6)
16 Secret agent ? (3)
18 Louder (7)
22 Forefather (8)
23 Samoan Port (4)
24 Dismount (3,3)
25 Preserve in vinegar (6)

DOWN

1 Disadvantages (9)
2 Haven (9)
3 Cowboy's rope (5)
4 Lift shoulders (5)
5 Exert restraint (4)
6 India's first P.M. (5)
10 Gone up (5)
11 Caribbean Republic (5)
12 Popular dessert in Karnataka and the rest of the country as well (6,3)
13 Run down (9)
17 Pasta variety (5)
19 Excluded from (3,2)
20 Fragment of cloth (5)
21 Prohibition (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: P EQUALS U

DIQZ OTZ DLBO LV JLPHBZEV, VLH OTIO SB IEE OTZHZ SB LV JLP.

Linemaro

I thought flowers were pretty till I laid my eyes on you

Mindchow

It's better to be able to appreciate things you can't have than have things you can't appreciate

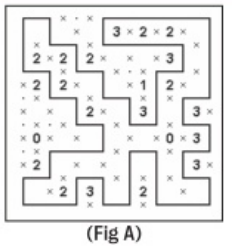
Joke of the day

I've always wanted a job cleaning mirrors. It's just something I can see myself doing

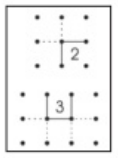
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

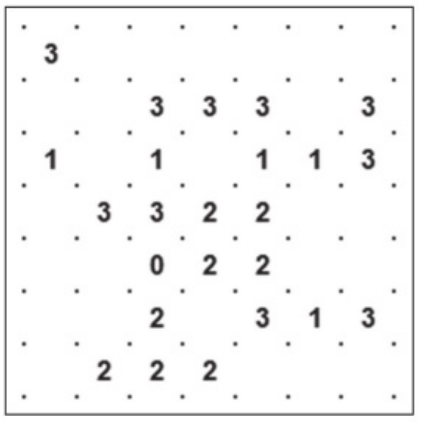


(Fig B) Not Allowed

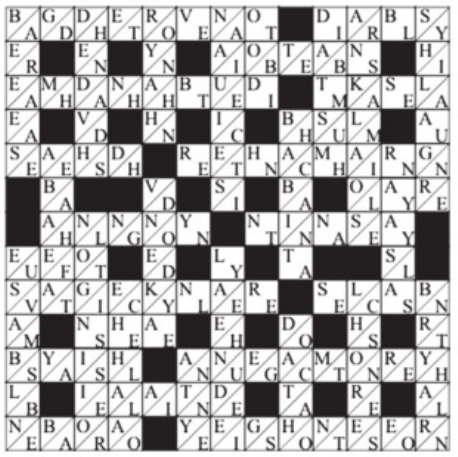
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3 F	4	5
6				
7				
8				
9				

ACROSS

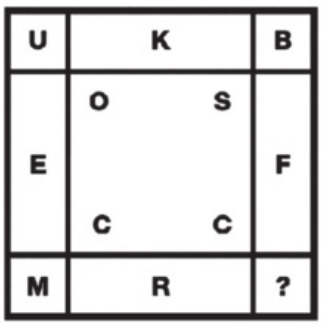
1 First; 6 Let in; 7 Atoms; 8 Up ret; 9 Riots

DOWN

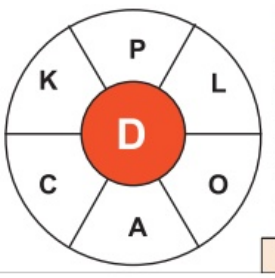
1 Err is; 2 It nor; 3 Flu to; 4 Pit me; 5 Sat ST

Mensapuzzle

Which letter replaces the question mark and completes the sequence?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

05 Average; 06 Good; 08 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

6				1		8	7	
					8	3		
	9		7	5				
		1	2				6	9
		5				1		
8	2				1	4		
				2	9		3	
		9	8					
	1	6		3				2

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 12

5 5 7 9

Medium = 3

2 3 3 3

Hard = 8

2 5 8 3

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

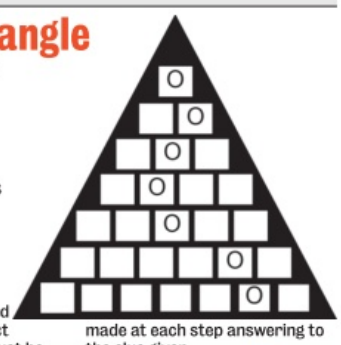
Differences: 1. Leash is longer. 2. Tail is moved. 3. Plate is moved. 4. Back of chair is taller. 5. Arm of chair is not as long. 6. Front of newspaper is different.

Riddler

There was a neighborhood of one-story houses. One was red and everything in the house was red. Another was purple and everything in the house was purple. Yet another was yellow and everything in the house was yellow. Still another was blue and everything in the house was blue. In the green house everything was green, and in the gray house everything was grey. What colour were the stairs in the yellow house?

Alpha triangle

1 Atomic number 8
2 Perfect Derek
3 Large snake
4 Canoe, for one
5 Swell up
6 Registered vote
7 Chest of drawers

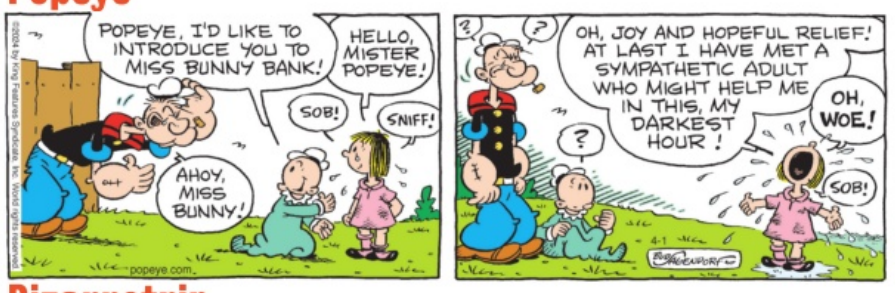


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye


POPEYE, I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE YOU TO MISS BUNNY BANK!
HELLO, MISTER POPEYE!
SOB!
SNIFF!
AHOY, MISS BUNNY!
OH, JOY AND HOPEFUL RELIEF! AT LAST I HAVE MET A SYMPATHETIC ADULT WHO MIGHT HELP ME IN THIS, MY DARKEST HOUR!
OH, WOE!
SOB!

Bizarrotrip

Wayno & Piraro 9-21-24
My kids make me feel insecure about my crackpot conspiracy theories and virulent intolerance.
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Diamond Lil

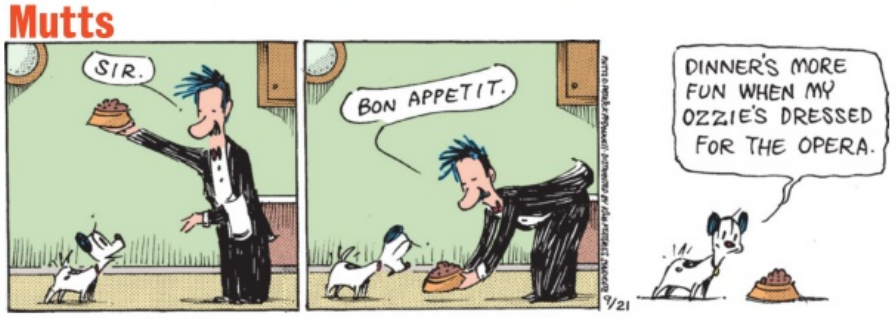
Hart of the city

HEY! DID EVERYONE HEAR ABOUT CAT'S EYE SURGERY? I THINK YOU CAN GO BLIND FROM THAT.
I'M SO GLAD WE'RE STILL FRIENDS!!!
UH, ME TOO?
HEART OF THE CITY © 2024 ANDREWS MCMEEL
@GOCOMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

Crankshaft

SINCE YOU'RE STAYING OPEN, LILLIAN... WE COULD HELP YOU FIX THIS.
OH, I'M NOT PLANNING TO FIX THIS!
I WANT PEOPLE TO BE REMINDED OF WHAT HAPPENED HERE!
BATIUK & DAVIS tombatiuk.com/books

Mutts



WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Your spiritual energy uplifts you today. Positive thinking and an inclination toward spirituality may lead you to visit religious places or explore occult sciences. Embrace your flawless nature but share your insights only with those who align with your wavelength.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Nervousness and impatience might challenge you today. You may be drawn to spirituality or occult knowledge to find peace. Trust your intuition and focus deeply on research or a subject of interest, as this will help you regain balance.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
The moon's favourable position brings positive momentum to your personal and professional life. Investments may yield gains, and your friends and relatives may reciprocate past favors. Your hard work is likely to pay off with significant success.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
You may see improvements in your children's health and consider investments for their future. Loyalty to your job will yield recognition, and job seekers might find opportunities through references. Hidden enemies could surface, but blessings will help you overcome them

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Good news may come your way regarding your career. Job seekers may succeed in exams through diligence, and singles could find their soulmates. Additionally, there could be positive news about childbirth within the family.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
You may feel the urge to change your location, but it's wise to delay such decisions for now. Avoid business investments during this period. By evening, with advice from elders, you may find clarity to resolve lingering issues.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
A short business trip might bring positive outcomes. Rewards for your achievements could enhance your reputation, and job seekers in management roles might find success. Singles are likely to get engaged, and good news from siblings is anticipated.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Blessings from elders open up new income sources, improving your finances. Renovating your home or growing your family business could be on the cards. Delayed projects are likely to resume. Patience is essential while signing contracts.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Vitality and good health define your day. While work is enjoyable, avoid unnecessary arguments to maintain family harmony. Healthy partnerships in business are possible if you keep a calm demeanour. Job seekers may find opportunities, and love birds should focus on meaningful discussions.

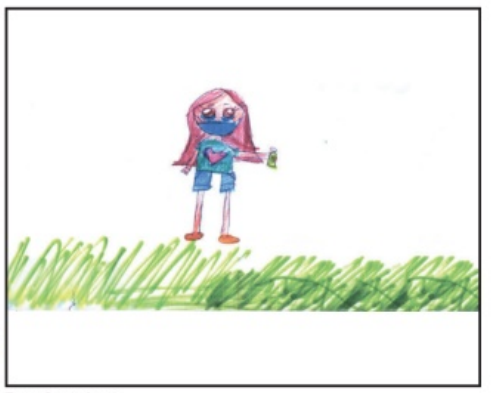
Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Your energy might feel low as old health issues resurface. Avoid adventurous activities or rash decisions. Settling disputes outside of legal proceedings is advised. An overseas tour might be on your mind, offering a refreshing change.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Past investments may bring profits, and implementing new ideas could drive business progress. Meeting an influential person might guide you toward success. Lovebirds may discuss marriage, and couples could receive good news about children. Job seekers are likely to find suitable roles.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Support from family and your spouse fosters domestic harmony. While work overload might limit family time, you'll still participate in a family gathering. Professionally, you're positioned for success, and government-related projects are set to progress.

KIDZONE

Sanjanna V, Bengaluru



Tara, Bengaluru

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Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
(6+3)·∜81
2·3
8

BULL'S EYE
clad, clod, coda, cold, clock, load, PADLOCK, plod

STRIKE OUT

A	D	H	E	R	E	N	T		D	A	B	S		
L		E	L	A	N	D		T		R		A		
B	A	I	L		N	U	G	A	T	O	R	Y		
A		S	E	A		H		O		H		R		
S	T	I	C	K	L	E	R		S	C	A	B		
U	F	O		D		Y		T		L				
A	N	N	O	Y		T	I	N	E	A				
	B		Y		S		B		L	Y	E			
S	A	S	H		R	E	N	A	M	I	N	G		
A		D		N		C		H	U	M		A		
E	M	A	N	A	T	E	D		T	A	E	L		
R		E		Y		I	O	T	A	S		I		
A	D	H	E	R	E	N	T		D	A	B	S		

QUICK

G	E	T	O	F	F		P	I	C	K	L	E		
N		T		O		A				G				
A	N	C	E	S	T	O	R		A	P	I	A		
	E		V		U		C			E		R		
S	P	Y		N	O	I	S	I	E	R		A		
K		R		E		T		O		P				
C	L	A	U	S	E		M	I	S	S	E	S		
A		U		I		A				Y		I		
B		T	H	R	O	U	G	H		M	U	D		
W		C		S		U		N		R		A		
A	U	N	T		S	T	R	A	I	G	H	T		
R		A		H		E		E				I		
D	I	S	M	A	L		S	P	R	I	N	G		

MENSA PUZZLE
D. The diagram contains 3 sets of 4 letters – one set of outer corner letters, one set of inner corner letters, and one set of letters on each side of the square. The numerical values of the letters in each set add up to 40.

SUDOKU

6	5	3	9	1	2	8	7	4
1	7	2	4	6	8	3	9	5
4	9	8	7	5	3	2	1	6
3	4	1	2	8	5	7	6	9
9	6	5	3	4	7	1	2	8
8	2	7	6	9	1	4	5	3
5	8	4	1	2	9	6	3	7
2	3	9	8	7	6	5	4	1
7	1	6	5	3	4	9	8	2

ALPHA TRIANGLE
0, 80, 804,
Boat, Bloat,
Ballot, Tallboy.

GO FIGURE
Easy
5 – 7 + 9 + 5 = 12
Medium
3 x 3 – 3 / 2 = 3
Hard
2 + 3 + 8 – 5 = 8

LOOP

KAKURO

FAST FIVE

R	O	T	I	S
E	R	U	P	T
S	T	O	M	A
I	N	L	E	T
R	I	F	T	S

QUOTE UNCODE
Make the most of yourself, for that is all there is of you.

RIDDLER
There are no stairs in any of the houses because they only have one story.

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JUST A TIFF

Bollywood cat fights that grabbed eyeballs this year

Throughout Bollywood's illustrious history, the industry has witnessed its fair share of dramatic clashes between leading ladies. These highly publicized conflicts not only captivated audiences but also became fodder for tabloids and gossip columns. However, despite the drama, many of these actresses have moved past their differences and continued to thrive in their careers, proving that in Bollywood, talent ultimately prevails over feuds. Here's taking a look at some popular cat fights that grabbed eyeballs. — ETimes

KAREENA KAPOOR AND AMEESHA PATEL

The animosity between these talented actresses has its roots in the early stages of their careers, stemming from the blockbuster film 'Kaho Naa Pyaar Hai.' Initially offered to Kareena Kapoor, disagreements led her to exit the project, paving the way for Ameesha Patel's debut, which became a major success and fueled the feud.

TAAPSEE PANNU AND KANGANA RANAUT

Kangana Ranaut criticized Taapsee Pannu, labeling her as a cheaper imitation of herself, citing similarities in their curly hair and fashion choices. Pannu faced harsh remarks from Ranaut, who accused her of copying her style. Ranaut's comments sparked controversy, highlighting tensions between the two actresses in the industry.

JAYA BACHCHAN AND MOUSHMI CHATTERJEE

Moushmi Chatterjee responded candidly to comparisons with Jaya Bachchan, asserting her superiority over the veteran actress. The controversy ensued after Chatterjee declined to provide photographs to the paparazzi. She openly expressed her belief that she surpassed Bachchan in various aspects.

ZEENAT AMAN AND MUMTAZ

Zeenat Aman and Mumtaz made headlines for their feud where they were seen slamming each other's comments. Mumtaz had reportedly criticised Zeenat's social media post where she was seen promoting live-in relationships. Later, this received strong reaction from Zeenat who stated that everyone is entitled to have their own opinion.

When Bombay Times contacted Mumtaz regarding the allegations, she refuted making any personal comments about Zeenat. Expressing her distress over the allegations, she emphasized that the reports were false and that she had never spoken in such a manner. She sought forgiveness from Zeenat for any misunderstanding caused.

KARISMA KAPOOR AND RAVEENA TANDON

In an interview, Raveena disclosed that director Rajkumar Santoshi, along with Salman Khan and Aamir Khan, grew weary of her ongoing feud with Karisma Kapoor. Recalling a scene in 'Andaz Apna Apna,' where they were tied to a pillar, Santoshi insisted they reconcile before being untied. Despite the past tension, Karisma and Raveena have reconciled, with their daughters playing a key role in reuniting them. On one of the early episodes of Koffee With Karan, Farah Khan had also called Raveena and Karisma's feud 'the nastiest catfight' she has ever witnessed.

SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Lyrical video unveiled

The first lyrical video of pan-India movie KD was unveiled on Tuesday. KD, billed as one of the big-ticket movies, is bankrolled by KVN Productions while Prem, known for helming action and sentiment-oriented movies, is the director. Dhruva Sarja and Reeshma Nanaiah are the lead pair.

The lyrical video song – Shiva Shiva – is sung by director Prem and bollywood playback singer Kailash Kher. Arjun Janya has scored its music. The same video was released in Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, and Hindi with different playback singers.

The talkie portion of the movie is done, but the shooting of two songs is pending.

"We made arrangements to release this song in five languages. Ajay Devgn unveiled the Hindi song; Harish Shankar released it in Telugu, and the Tamil song was by Lokesh Kanakaraj. The movie is set against the backdrop of old Bengaluru during the 1970s and 1980s. It was not easy to recreate such scenes for this movie. I thank art director Mohan BK for putting up such sets. The protagonist, played by Dhruva Sarja, has two shades – innocent and raw. Reeshma Nanaiah looks glamorous in the movie. We are planning to unveil the movie's teaser in Mumbai," said Prem, adding the movie has six songs and the talkie portion was completed in 150 days.

Thanking Prem for unveiling the video, Dhruva Sarja said music director Arjun Janya has done a fantastic job. "It is the first time Arjun Janya has scored music for my movie. Producer Venkat insisted on having a folk song. The movie has turned out well," Dhruva Sarja said.